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## SOUTHEAST ASIA

### 3. Viet Minh increasing supply operations in Tonkin:

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Meanwhile, the American Army Attaché in Saigon stated that in northwestern Tonkin, during the past week, 40 trucks were reported by the French moving south from the Tonkin border town of Laokay to Yen Bay. Normal traffic on this route is four trucks per week.

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The Army Attaché's report supplements unconfirmed information [redacted] of [redacted] improved Chinese transportation facilities north of Laokay, and suggests the possibility that this western route will assume more importance in the future. Most Chinese supplies to the Viet Minh have in the past entered Tonkin by routes considerably to the east.

A rate of 40 trucks per week, if maintained, could provide the Viet Minh in northwestern Tonkin with 400 to 500 tons of materiel per month. Large supplies in this area would facilitate the consolidation of the Viet Minh's recently acquired territory in northwestern Tonkin.

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## NEAR EAST - AFRICA

4. Russians voice suspicion of Point IV activities in northern Iran:

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Prime Minister Mossadeq reported to Ambassador Henderson on 3 February that Russia is suspicious of Point IV activity in the Caspian area and has pointed out that the program "is beginning to post announcements as though it were an integral part of the Iranian Government." Mossadeq said he did not believe that Iran or Point IV would suffer if the latter transferred its activities further south.

Comment: Moscow has adopted a conciliatory attitude toward the liquidation of the fisheries agreement, but is unlikely to accept any foreign activity in this sensitive area without bringing pressure on the Iranian Government.

5. Britain prepared to compromise on retention of British officials in the Sudan:

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The British Ambassador in Cairo has been authorized to accept the Egyptian demand that the British relinquish all administrative posts in the Sudan within three years, according to an Embassy officer. In return, Britain insists that the self-determination procedure take place under international supervision and that Egypt accept the British proposal on safeguards for the southern Sudan.

Comment: This British decision would provide the solution to one of the two major barriers to an Anglo-Egyptian agreement.

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6. Khartoum may seek political solution from Sudan Parliament:

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[Redacted]

The Sudan Government is considering asking Sudanese political leaders to have the parliament determine the country's future if the current Anglo-Egyptian talks break down, according to the American Liaison Officer in Khartoum. British officials in the Sudan Government believe that Sudanese leaders would agree to elections on this basis.

Comment: There is no indication that London supports this proposed course of action, particularly since its ambassador in Cairo has received instructions which reportedly "go a long way" toward meeting the Egyptian position.

The Sudan Government's suggestion would be adamantly opposed by Egypt.

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## WESTERN EUROPE

8. Austrians press West for maximum effort to end occupation:

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[Redacted]

Foreign Minister Gruber has told the three Western High Commissioners that Austria "would pay almost any price" to get the Russians out of the country. He urged that the negotiations scheduled to start on 6 February be prolonged as long as possible in an effort to ascertain whether the "Soviet price" is one which the Austrian Parliament would consider bearable with Western help.

Comment: The USSR is unlikely to sign a treaty at this stage. The Western deputies, however, are agreed to an eventual detailed review of the long draft if this is desired by the Soviet Union. In this case there would be strong pressure from the Austrians, British, and French to accept its economic articles.

9. French municipal elections may delay Assembly EDC debate:

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[Redacted]

French National Assembly debate of the EDC treaty cannot be expected until May, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Committee. He explains that under the most favorable circumstances the treaty could not come to the Assembly floor before 15 April, when the imminence of the municipal elections, now tentatively scheduled for 3 May, would postpone a debate.

Comment: In view of Secretary Dulles' pressure for quick action, Foreign Minister Bidault may press for earlier consideration. However, the present temper of the Assembly, as indicated by the recent appointments of two anti-EDC deputies to report the treaty out of committee, suggests a tendency to resent pressure.

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10. France apparently prepared to make concessions on Tunisia:

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[Redacted]

France is now prepared to make concessions on Tunisia going beyond the 1952 reform program, according to a spokesman for the French Residency in Tunis. He states that both Premier Mayer and Foreign Minister Bidault feel that the time for a settlement is approaching. Progress in this direction, however, will depend on Tunisian willingness to cooperate.

Bidault, according to this spokesman, will accept a resumption of negotiations by direct conversations between the Bey and the Resident. He is ready to consider Tunisian suggestions for "far-reaching changes" in the program proposed by France last year.

The American Consul General in Tunis sees a fair chance that this new approach will succeed, but enumerates various obstacles still to be overcome.

Comment: Mayer appears to be adopting a more realistic policy on Tunisia than Pinay and may be more willing to follow a line closer to the 1952 UN General Assembly resolution urging resumption of French-Tunisian negotiations.